



# OBSERVATION OPTION TOOLKIT<sup>2002</sup> for Acute Otitis Media

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## Overview of Acute Otitis Media Treatment Options

These recommendations apply to children with uncomplicated acute otitis media defined as middle-ear effusion plus onset within 48 hours of signs or symptoms of middle ear inflammation.

Child Age	Certain Diagnosis	Uncertain Diagnosis
Under 6 months	Antibiotics	Antibiotics
6 months to 2 years	Antibiotics	Antibiotics if severe illness Observe* if non-severe illness
2 years or older	Antibiotics if severe illness Observe* if non-severe illness	Observe*

\*Observation is appropriate *only when* follow-up can be assured and antibiotics started if symptoms persist or worsen.

*Non-severe illness* implies mild otalgia and fever <39°C orally (about 102°F) or 39.5°C rectally in the past 24 hours. *Severe illness* is moderate to severe otalgia or higher fever.

*Certain diagnosis* is a clinical picture suggesting acute otitis media with a high probability of middle-ear effusion.

*Uncertain diagnosis* is a clinical picture suggesting acute otitis media with anything less than a high probability of middle ear effusion.